Act, 1955 during 2004, 2005 and 2006 are as under:—

Year	Number of cases
2004	**126**
2005	**453**
2006	**454**

Schools for blind and deaf children

2925. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry runs schools for blind and deaf children;

(b) if so, the details of such schools being run across the country;

(c) whether NGOs have approached the Ministry to takeover the running of schools for deaf and blind children run by them; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) No, Sir. The Ministry does not run schools for blind and deaf children. However, the Ministry has been supporting an autonomous body, namely National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, Dehradun and Non-Governmental Organizations for running such schools.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

National Overseas Scholarship Scheme

2926. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of students who have been awarded scholarship under the National Overseas Scholarship Scheme during the last and current academic session in Tamil Nadu;

(b) whether Government has taken steps to make awareness about this scheme for optimum utilization by those students;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the proposed number of beneficiaries under this scheme for the Eleventh Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (DR. RAMESHWAR ORAON): (a) Under the scheme of National Overseas Scholarships for Scheduled Tribe candidates, during the Tenth Plan period, upto 10 provisional awards could be granted every year so as to enable the selected candidates to obtain admission in any recognised foreign university followed by final awards. In 2007-08,2 students were sanctioned final awards to proceed for studies abroad and one of them was from Tamil Nadu.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Applications are invited under the Scheme through advertisements, published in various news-papers (national as well as regional), and also posted on the website of the Ministry.

(d) Under the scheme, 75 awards may be sanctioned to ST students in the Eleventh Five Year Plan period, (maximum 15 awards per year, of which 13 awards per year are for Scheduled Tribes and 2 awards per year are for Primitive Tribal Groups).

Tribals sub-plan allocation

2927. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the tribals sub-plan allocations are in proportion to the tribal population in the country;

(b) whether Government is aware that the sub-plan allocations are far below eight per cent; and

(c) the steps taken for proportionate allocations in the next budget?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (DR. RAMESHWAR ORAON): (a) and (b) As per the guidelines issued by the Planning Commission, Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) States are expected to allocate funds as per the proportion of the Scheduled Tribe population in the State. Fourteen out of twenty-two TSP States have allocated funds as per the guidelines.

(c) The Planning Commission monitors the allocation of funds under TSP while finalizing the Annual Action Plan of the States. The Ministry has also written to the State Governments for the strict compliance of guidelines issued by the Planning Commission.

Poverty among tribals

2928. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of TRIBALAFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the present criteria adopted by Government to identify poverty among tribals; and

(b) what are the steps to help the tribals having marginal land holdings who are deprived of the BPL benefits because of the present criteria being dubious?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (DR. RAMESHWAR ORAON): (a) The Planning Commission estimates the incidence of poverty at national level and State level from the large sample surveys on Household Consumer expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) after an interval of approximately five years according to the methodology contained in the Report of the Expert Group on Estimation of Proportion and Number of Poor. The percentage of people living below the poverty line among the Scheduled Tribe population are estimated from the percentage distribution of Scheduled Tribe persons as obtained from the above Survey of Consumer Expenditure and poverty line of all population. While the estimation of incidence of poverty is done by Planning Commission and identification of the poor is done by the State Governments in association with the Ministry of Rural Development, identification of the poor is done by the State Governments in association with the Ministry of Rural Development. Further, the Ministry of Rural Development conducts the Below Poverty Line (BPL) Census in rural areas to identify the BPL households who could be targeted under its various programmes. The last BPL Census conducted in 2002 was based on score based ranking of rural household and had 13 socio-economic parameters including various sizes of land holdings.